

Udmurt language

Udmurt (удмурт кыл, *udmurt kyl*) is a [Uralic language](#), part of the [Permic](#) subgroup, spoken by the [Udmurt](#) natives of the Russian constituent republic of [Udmurtia](#), where it is co-official with [Russian](#). It is written using the [Cyrillic](#) alphabet with the addition of five characters not used in the [Russian orthography](#): **Ӷ/ӷ**, **ӹ/Ӹ**, **Ӱ/ӻ**, **Ӯ/Ӵ**, and **ӵ/Ӷ**. Together with [Komi](#) and [Komi-Permyak](#) languages, it constitutes the Permic grouping of the Uralic [family](#). Among outsiders, it has traditionally been referred to by its Russian [exonym](#), **Votyak**. Udmurt has borrowed vocabulary from neighboring languages [Tatar](#) and [Russian](#).

[Ethnologue](#) estimates 550,000 native speakers (77%) in an ethnic population of 750,000 in the former USSR (1989 census).^[3]

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Udmurt	
удмурт кыл <i>udmurt kyl</i>	
Native to	Russia
Region	Udmurtia
Ethnicity	Udmurts
Native speakers	340,000 (2010 census) ^[1]
Language family	Uralic <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Permic ▪ Udmurt
Official status	
Official language in	 Russia <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪  Udmurtia
Language codes	
ISO 639-2	udm (https://www.loc.gov/standards/iso639-2/php/langcodes_name.php?code_ID=469)
ISO 639-3	udm
Glottolog	udmu1245 (http://glottolog.org/resource/languoid/id/udmu1245) ^[2]

Dialects

Udmurt varieties can be grouped in three broad dialect groups:

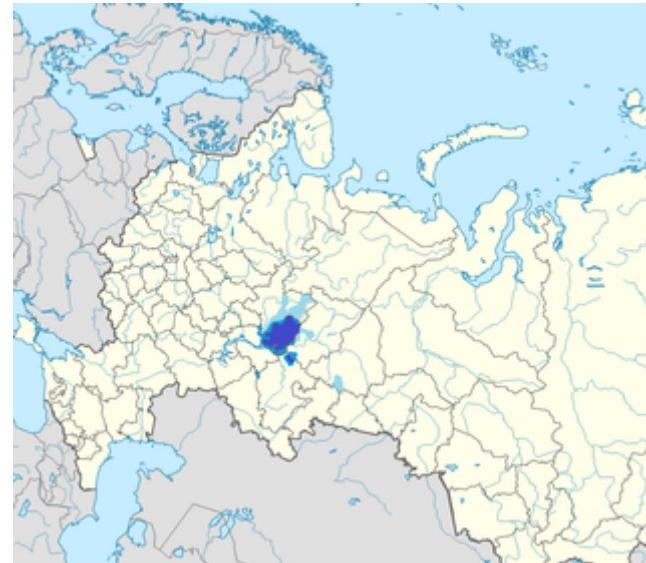
- Northern Udmurt, spoken along [Cheptsa River](#)

- Southern Udmurt
- Besermyan, spoken by the strongly Turkified Besermyans

A continuum of intermediate dialects between Northern and Southern Udmurt is found, and literary Udmurt includes features from both areas. Besermyan is more sharply distinguished.

The differences between the dialects are regardless not major, and mainly involve differences in vocabulary, largely attributable to the stronger influence of Tatar in the southern end of the Udmurt-speaking area. A few differences in morphology and phonology still exist as well, e.g.

- Southern Udmurt has an accusative ending *-ыз /-ɪz/*, contrasting with northern *-ты /-tɪ/*.
- Southwestern Udmurt distinguishes an eighth vowel phoneme */ɯ/*.
- Besermyan has */e/* in place of standard Udmurt */ə/* (thus distinguishing only six vowel phonemes), and */ø/* in place of standard Udmurt */ɨ/*.



Orthography

Udmurt is written using a modified version of the Russian Cyrillic alphabet:

Uppercase	Lowercase	Transliteration ^[4]	IPA	Letter name
А	а	а	[ɑ]	а
Б	б	б	[b]	бә
В	в	в	[v]	вә
Г	г	г	[g]	гә
Д	д	d, d'	[d]; palatal [d̯] when followed by я, е, и, ё, ю or ь	дә
Е	е	e, je	[jɛ]; [d̯jɛ] when preceded by д, т, з, с, л, or н	е
Ё	ё	jo	[jɔ]; [d̯jɔ] when preceded by д, т, з, с, л, or н	ё
Ж	ж	ž	[ʒ]	жә
Ҷ	җ	dž	[dʒ]	җә
З	з	z, ž	[z]; palatal [z̯] when followed by я, е, и, ё, ю or ь	зә
Ң	ڇ	dž	[dʒ̯]	ڇә
И	и	i	[i]; [d̯i] when preceded by д, т, з, с, л, or н	и
Ӣ	ӣ	ī	[i] when preceded by д, т, з, с, л, or н	точкаен и, точкаосын и ("dotted i")
Ӣ	ӣ	j	[j]	вакчи и ("short i")
К	к	k	[k]	ка
Л	л	l, l'	[l]; palatal [l̯] when followed by я, е, и, ё, ю or ь	эл
М	м	m	[m]	эм
Ң	ң	n, ñ	[n]; palatal [n̯] when followed by я, е, и, ё, ю or ь	эн
О	о	o	[o]	о
Ӯ	ö	ö	[ʌ ~ ə]	ö
Ҟ	Ҟ	p	[p]	пә
Ҕ	Ҕ	r	[r̯]	эр
С	с	s, ś	[s]; palatal [s̯] when followed by я, е, и, ё, ю or ь	эс
Ҭ	ҭ	t, t'	[t]; palatal [t̯] when followed by я, е, и, ё, ю or ь	тә
Ү	ү	u	[u]	ү
Փ ¹	Փ	f	[f]	эф
Х ¹	Х	h	[x]	ха
Җ ¹	Җ	c	[t̯s̯]	цә
Ҕ	Ҕ	ć	[t̯s̯]	чә

Ӄ	ӄ	ӂ	[tʃ]	ӃЭ
Ш	ш	š	[ʃ]	ша
Ҙ ¹	ҙ	šč	[ɛ(:)]	ща
Ҋ ²	Ҋ	-	-	чурыйт пус ("hard sign")
Ӧ	Ӧ	у	[χ ~ ɯ]	Ӧ
Ӧ	Ӧ	-	[j]	небыйт пус ("soft sign")
Ӭ	Ӭ	e, ē	[e]	Ӭ
Ю	ю	ju	[ju]; [j u] when preceded by д, т, з, с, л, or н	ю
Я	я	ja	[ja]; [j a] when preceded by д, т, з, с, л, or н	я

■ ¹ Only used in Russian loanwords and names.

■ ² Silent, but required to distinguish palatalized consonants (/dʒ tʒ zʒ sʒ lʒ nʒ/) from unpalatalized consonants followed by /j/ if followed by a vowel; for example, /zʒo/ and /zjo/ are written -зё- and -зъё-, respectively.

Phonology

The language does not distinguish between long and short vowels and does not have vowel harmony.

		Labial	Alveolar		Post-alveolar	Alveolo-palatal	Palatal		Velar
			plain	lat.			plain	lat.	
Plosive	<u>voiceless</u>	p	t						k
	<u>voiced</u>	b	d						g
Affricate	<u>voiceless</u>		(ts)		tʃ	tʂ			
	<u>voiced</u>		(dʐ)		dʒ	dʐ			
Fricative	<u>voiceless</u>	(f)	s		ʃ	ʂ			(x)
	<u>voiced</u>	v	z		ʒ	ʐ			
Nasal		m	n				ŋ		ɳ
Approximant				l			j	ʎ	
Trill			r						

The consonants /f x tʂ/ are restricted to loanwords, and are traditionally replaced by /p k tʂ/ respectively.

	Front	Central	Back
	Unrounded	Round	
Close	i	ɯ	u
Mid	e	ə	o
Open	a		

Grammar

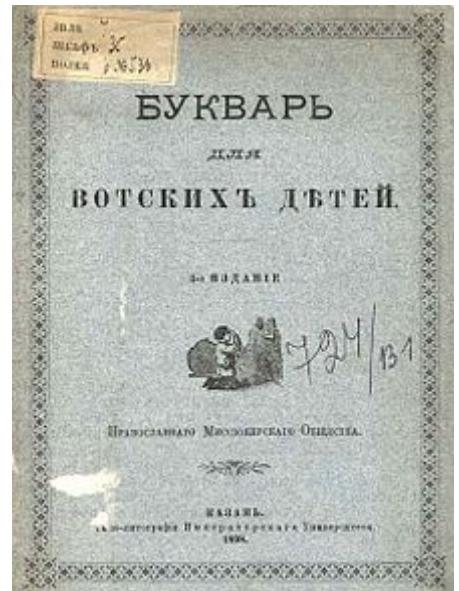
Udmurt is an agglutinating language. It uses affixes to express possession, to specify mode, time, and so on.

No gender distinction is made in nouns or in personal pronouns

Cases

Udmurt has fifteen cases: eight grammatical cases and seven locative cases.

There is no congruency between adjectives and nouns in neutral Udmurt noun phrases, i.e. there is no adjective declension as in the inessive noun phrase *бадӟым гуртын*, 'in a large/big village' (cf. Finnish inessive phrase *isossa kylässä* 'in a large/big village', in which *iso* 'big/large' is inflected according to the head noun).



Udmurt language textbook, 1898 (in Russian) Букварь для вотскихъ дѣтей (<http://static.my-shop.ru/product/pdf/115/1149493.pdf>)

Udmurt cases			
Case	Suffix	Example	Translation
Grammatical			
<u>nominative</u>	-	гурт /gurt/	village
<u>genitive</u>	-лэн /ßen/	гуртлэн /gurtßen/	of a village / village's
<u>accusative</u>	-эз/-еэз/-тыз/-ыз /ez/jez/t̩i/ži/	гуртэз /gurtez/	village (as an object)
<u>ablative</u>	-лесь /ßen/	гуртлесь /gurtßen/	from a village
<u>dative</u>	-лы /ži/	гуртлы /gurtži/	to a village
<u>instrumental</u>	-эн/-ен/-ын /en/jen/žn/	гуртэн /gurten/	by means of a village
<u>abessive</u>	-тэк /tek/	гурттэк /gurt:ek/	without a village
<u>adverbial</u>	-я /ja/	гуртья /gurtja/	in a village way
Locative cases*			
<u>inessive</u>	-ын /žn/	гуртын /gurtžn/	in a village
<u>illative</u>	-э/-е/-ы /e/je/ž/	гуртэ /gurte/	into a village (or house)
<u>elative</u>	-ысь /žš/	гуртысь /gurtžš/	from a village
<u>egressive</u>	-ысен /žšen/	гуртысен /gurtžšen/	starting from a village
<u>terminative</u>	-озь /ož/	гуртозь /gurtož/	end up at a village
<u>prolative</u>	-этй/-етй/-ытй/-тй /eti/jeti/žti/ti/	гуртэтй /gurteti/	along a village
<u>allative</u>	-лань /žan/	гуртлань /gurtžan/	towards a village

*Of all the locative cases, personal pronouns can only inflect in the allative (also called approximative).

Plural

There are two types of nominal plurals in Udmurt. One is the plural for nouns *-oc/-ëc* and the other is the plural for adjectives *-эсъ/-есъ*.

Nominal plural

The noun is always in plural. In attributive plural phrases, the adjective is not required to be in the plural:

Attributive plural	
Udmurt	English
чебер(есь) нылъёс	(the) beautiful <i>girls</i>

The plural marker always comes before other endings (i.e. cases and possessive suffixes) in the morphological structure of plural nominal.

Morphological order	
Udmurt	English
нылъёслы	to the girls
гуртъёсазы	to/in their villages

Predicative plural

As in Hungarian, if the subject is plural, the adjective is always plural when it functions as the sentence's predicative:

Attributive plural	
Udmurt	English
нылъёс чебересь	the girls are <i>beautiful</i>
толъёс кузесь	the winters are <i>cold</i>

Udmurt pronouns are inflected much in the same way that their referent nouns are. However, personal pronouns are only inflected in the grammatical cases and cannot be inflected in the locative cases.

Pronouns

Personal pronouns

Somewhat like in English, Udmurt personal pronouns are used to refer to human beings only. However, the third person singular can be referred to *it*. The nominative case of personal pronouns are listed in the following table:

Personal pronouns	
Udmurt	English
Singular	
моn /mon/	I
тоn /ton/	you
со /so/	she or he or it
Plural	
ми /mi/	we
тї /ti/	you
коoc /so:s/	they

Interrogative pronouns

Udmurt interrogative pronouns inflect in all cases. However, the inanimate interrogative pronouns 'what' in the locative cases have the base form *кыт-*. The nominative case of interrogative pronouns are listed in the following table:

Interrogative pronouns (nominative case)	
Udmurt	English
Singular	
ма /ma/	what
кин /kin/	who
Plural	
маос /maos/	what
кинъёс /kinjos/	who

Verbs

Udmurt verbs are divided into two conjugation groups, both having the infinitive marker *-ны*.

There are three verbal moods in Udmurt: indicative, conditional and imperative. There is also an optative mood used in certain dialects. The indicative mood has four tenses: present, future, and two past tenses. In addition there are four past tense structures which include auxiliary verbs. Verbs are negated by use of an auxiliary negative verb that conjugates with personal endings.

The basic verbal personal markers in Udmurt are (with some exceptions):

Personal endings of verbs	
Person	Ending
Singular	
1st	-Ø
2nd	-д
3rd	-з
Plural	
1st	-мы
2nd	-ды
3rd	-зы

Example conjugation: тодыны (conjugation I)

Person	Udmurt	English
Singular		
1st	тодысько*	I know
2nd	тодыськод*	you know
3rd	тодэ	he/she knows
Plural		
1st	тодыськомы	we know
2nd	тодыськоды	you know
3rd	тодо	they know

*The present tense in Udmurt in all but the third person, is marked with -(и)сько-/-(-и)сько-.

Syntax

Udmurt is an SOV language.

Lexicon

Depending on the style, about 10 to 30 percent of the Udmurt lexicon consists of loanwords. Many loanwords are from the Tatar language, which has also strongly influenced Udmurt phonology and syntax.

The Udmurt language itself, together with the Tatar language, influenced the language of the Udmurt Jews, in the dialects of which the words of Finno-Ugric and Turkic origin there were recorded.^{[5][6][7][8]}



A bilingual sign proclaiming "welcome" in Russian "добро пожаловать" /deb 'ro pe 'zaləvətj/ (upper) and Udmurt "гажаса ётиськом" /gaʒasa ətjieskom/ (lower). This picture was taken in Izhevsk, the capital of Udmurtia.

Media in Udmurt

Eurovision runners-up Buranovskiye Babushki, a pop group composed of Udmurt grandmothers, sing mostly in Udmurt.^[9]

The romantic comedy film Berry-Strawberry, a joint Polish-Udmurt production, is in the Udmurt language.

In 2013, the film company "Inwis kinopottonni" produced a film in the Udmurt language called Puzkar ("nest").^[10]

The Bible was first completely translated into Udmurt in 2013.^[11]

Bibliography

- Kel'makov, Valentin; Sara Hännikäinen (2008). *Udmurtin kielioppia ja harjoituksia* (in Finnish) (2nd ed.). Helsinki: Suomalais-Ugrilainen Seura. ISBN 978-952-5150-34-6.
 - Moreau, Jean-Luc (2009). *Parlons Oudmourte*. Paris: L'Harmattan. ISBN 2-296-07951-2.

References

11. "First Bible in Udmurt – arrives this week!" (<http://www.unitedbiblesocieties.org/news/first-bible-in-udmurt-arrives-this-week/>). United Bible Societies. Retrieved 12 April 2015.

External links

- [Udmurtology: Udmurt Language, History and Culture](http://udmurt.info) (<http://udmurt.info>) (in Russian)
 - [Literature](https://web.archive.org/web/20070224030915/http://library.finugor.ru/eng/?item=u&l=2) (<https://web.archive.org/web/20070224030915/http://library.finugor.ru/eng/?item=u&l=2>)
 - [The First Udmurt Forum](http://udmurtology.ru) (<http://udmurtology.ru>) (in Russian)
 - [Udmurt State University](http://v4.udsu.ru/english/) (has Udmurt Language Program for English speakers) (<http://v4.udsu.ru/english/>)
 - [Udmurt language, alphabet and pronunciation](http://www.omniglot.com/writing/udmurt.htm) (<http://www.omniglot.com/writing/udmurt.htm>)
 - [Vladimir Napolskikh. Review of Eberhard Winkler, Udmurt, München 2001 \(Languages of the World. Materials 212\)](http://udmurt.info/pdf/library/napolskikh/winkler.pdf) (<http://udmurt.info/pdf/library/napolskikh/winkler.pdf>)
 - [Udmurt – Finnish/Komi Zyrian dictionary](http://kyv.oahpa.no/) (<http://kyv.oahpa.no/>) (robust finite-state, open-source)
 - [Learning Udmurt words](http://baltoslav.eu/hulnia/udm.php?mova=en) (<http://baltoslav.eu/hulnia/udm.php?mova=en>)
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